



Underwater Winners

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Do you have comments about ...

- Exhibits?
- The Web site?
- Aquarium programs?
- *Aquarium News* articles?

We welcome your suggestions and ideas!
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Is your membership about to expire?

Three EASY ways to renew!

1. Call 1-800-832 FISH
2. Check ncaquariums.com and click on "Join the Aquarium"
3. Complete the membership form on pg. 17. Write **RENEWAL** at the top, then clip and mail!

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Soundings

Another summer, another half-million visitors at the three NC Aquariums!

It's no longer surprising that the majority of the Aquariums' annual million-plus visitors come in June, July and August. It is the beach after all, and the draw of sand, sun and surf attracts North Carolinians from every corner of the state.

Approximately 10 percent of Aquarium visitors are members like you – supporters who enjoy free, year-round admission, along with discounts on gift shop purchases and participation in members-only programs. Thanks to our national accreditation in the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, members also enjoy free admission to more than 150 other aquariums and zoos around the country, including the NC Zoo in Asheboro.

Family memberships are by far the most popular. They comprise more than 85 percent of our large and growing membership base, which more than tripled with the expansion of the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores in 2006. Family membership also offers the biggest bang for the buck, allowing an entire family, includ-

ing children and grandchildren under age 18, unlimited admission at all three Aquariums for only \$50 annually.

The Aquariums always seek to provide visitors with the best possible experience, and we hope your member benefits are the best they can be. However, we'd like to hear what *you think*. Throughout the summer we'll be conducting member surveys that include focus groups, on-site interviews and on-line questionnaires via emails.

The first of these is now on the Aquarium website at ncaquariums.com. Please visit, then click on *Join the Aquarium* and you'll see our *Member Survey* highlighted. After completing the survey, just hit submit. In appreciation for your participation, we'll deduct \$10 from your next membership renewal! Our findings will be shared in the fall/winter issue of the *Aquarium News*.

Thanks again for your wonderful support. See you at the Aquariums!

Executive Vice President
 NC Aquarium Society

Contents for Summer 2008



Sandy Smith of Duncansville, PA, snapped this lionfish on the *Papoose* at a depth of 100 feet. Her shot won Honorable Mention in the 2007 Underwater Open category.



On the Cover: Big-eyed, blackbar soldierfish are nocturnal. Chris Smith of Baltimore, MD, found these four huddled beneath a lacy ledge at 120 feet, winning him first place in the Aquariums' Underwater Open category. See Photo Winners on page 8.

Cover Inset: Small, frilly, feather duster worms, also called Christmas tree worms, were busy feeding at 110 feet for Emily Fisher of Marquette, MI. Her photo won Honorable Mention in the Underwater Close-up category.

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Photo by Sherry White

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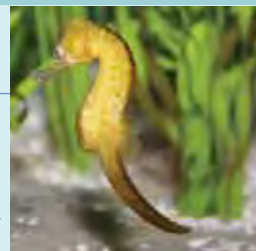


Photo by Emmett Westbrook

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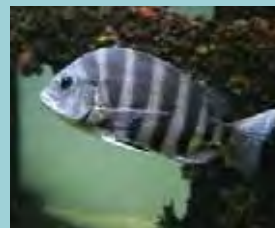


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Bullfrogs

Photo by Debbie Gleeson

Feelin' Froggy

The year 2008 is a Leap Year – perfect timing for a “Year of the Frog” celebration! The Aquariums have joined the Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ (AZA) effort to bring amphibians out of the shadows and into the limelight.

Amphibians include frogs, toads and salamanders. These slippery, prickly little creatures tend to give people the “willies,” however, they are found in almost every climate and ecosystem around the globe – from hot, dry deserts to cold, Arctic tundra. Learning more about these secretive animals might make them....well...a bit more appealing.

By some estimates, extinction threatens at least one-third of the world's 6,000 known amphibian species, more than 70

of which reside in North Carolina. Throughout 2008 the Aquariums will focus on these interesting vertebrates in films, games, contests, programs, outdoor activities and other fun-filled events. New exhibits will highlight



Poison Dart Frog

Photo by William Davis

intriguing specimens such as green and gray tree frogs, poison dart frogs, Southern toads, salamanders, cricket frogs and more. Programs may also feature reptiles that share habitats with these squiggly creatures, such as alligators, snakes and lizards.

Make plans to hop on the bandwagon and get “toad-ally” involved during your next Aquarium visit!



Leopard Frog

Photo by Claire Aubel



Marbled Salamander

Photo by John Mauser



Photo by Julie Powers

A Moving Experience

By Kevin Mathis, Aquarist

Aquariums use specially designed stretchers to move large aquatic animals.

The recent transfer of a sand tiger shark from the Aquarium at Fort Fisher to the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores demonstrates the planning and teamwork it takes to relocate large aquatic animals.

Sand tigers must continually swim to move water over their gills. For the 100-pound, six-foot-long, female sand tiger, the husbandry staff at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores assembled a 1,200-gallon, 12-foot by 4-foot fiberglass tank, rounded at the ends, with systems to circulate water and inject air and oxygen.

Arriving at the Aquarium at Fort Fisher, the container was filled with water from the shark's holding tank to avoid sudden changes in temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen or pH levels. Earlier, the Fort Fisher staff had gradually adjusted these parameters to be similar to the shark's new home – the 306,000-gallon *Living Shipwreck* at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores.

After settling the shark into its transport tank, we headed

out, stopping every half-hour or so to check water quality and the shark's condition. Once at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, the transport tank was partially drained and *Living Shipwreck* water pumped in. When water quality conditions reached optimum, the shark was placed on a stretcher and moved to a smaller holding tank. The Aquarium's veterinary team performed routine health checks of blood and gill samples and skin scrapes. Back in the stretcher, the shark was weighed before being lowered into the *Living Shipwreck* acclimation pool, where it was measured.

Swimming freely in the pool, and its gill rate measuring normal, the shark was released into the *Living Shipwreck*. Divers spent an hour monitoring its condition and interaction with the other animals. Exiting the exhibit, they continued to observe its behavior. All appeared normal and the concerted effort and teamwork ensured a successful transition!



Photo by Emmett Westbrook, Foto FX

Divers take measurements before releasing the shark into its new home.



Photo by Claire Aubel

With vital statistics recorded, the shark is left to rest and adapt in the acclimation pool.



Photo courtesy of US Coast Guard

With flippers aflutter, a green sea turtle appears anxious to hit the water. NEST volunteer Linda Turowski (left) and Aquarists Connie Dobbs (center) and Christian Guerreri (right) escorted eight sea turtles to the Gulf Stream for release.

Balmier Temps for Turtles

How do you get eight juvenile sea turtles into the Gulf Stream in February? With the help of the US Coast Guard!

It was a chilly but sunny winter morning. Linda Turowski, from the Network for Endangered Sea Turtles (NEST), and Aquarists Connie Dobbs and Christian Guerreri, from the Aquarium on Roanoke Island, boarded the US Coast Guard Motor Lifeboat stationed at Cape Hatteras Inlet. The threesome were joining the boat's six crew to deliver eight sea turtles to the warm waters of the Gulf Stream.

Six of the turtles were graduates of the NEST rehabilitation center at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island. They had begun arriving at the NEST center as

cold-stunned survivors two days before Christmas. Cold-stunned "patients" continued coming in until late January. Now, toasty-warm, well fed and weighing 8 to 12 pounds each, they were healthy and ready to go back to sea – but not into the cold Atlantic. They needed balmier temperatures. Also seeking warmer waters were two juvenile turtles from the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores. All had been cleared for release in early February.

After a pleasant two-hour run to the Gulf Stream, which included sightings of dolphins and sea birds, the turtles were anxious to hit the 70-degree water. Placed gently overboard, they wasted no time in disappearing into the depths.

Hawkins Accepts Fisheries Post

By Claire Aubel, Public Relations Assistant



Photo by Sherry White

Jess Hawkins, special activities instructor at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, grew up fishing on the North Carolina coast and worked as a marine biologist for the NC Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) for more than 30 years. Gov. Mike Easley recently appointed Hawkins to the NC Marine Fisheries Commission, which sets policy for NCDMF. He will serve for three years on the nine-member board.

The Marine Fisheries Commission works to protect and develop the state's fishing industries, while conserving marine and estuarine resources. Hawkins feels the appointment is a perfect complement to his current position at the Aquarium. As a special activities instructor, he leads fishing workshops and instructs classes in natural history and conservation, as well as angling skills.

"I'm honored to have been selected for the commission," said Hawkins. "My experience as a biologist and Aquarium educator will help me do the good job our citizens and natural resources deserve."



'Cool' Summer Fun



More than a million-plus friends visit the Aquariums each year – at least half of them during summer. The Aquariums offer public programs and activities year-round and, as you might imagine, they are very popular.

Daily in-house programs, such as live animal presentations, storytime, live-dives and animal feedings are free with paid admission. Special Activity programs, such as marsh adventures, snorkeling classes, surfing lessons, kayaking trips and summer camps fill quickly. Special Activity programs require advance registration and a fee.

To take part in a Special Activity at your favorite Aquarium, visit ncaquariums.com and check the interactive calendar. It lists details about each activity, and more information is available on the Programs and Events page. To take part in a Special Activity, register as far in advance as possible. For questions and to register, call your selected Aquarium: **Roanoke Island 252-473-3493 or 1-866-332-3475; Pine Knoll Shores 252-247-4003 or 1-866-294-3477; Fort Fisher 910-458-8259 or 1-866-301-3476.**



Photo by Wayne Justice

Photo by Wayne Justice

Photo by Andrew Irvine



Flocking Together

By William Davis, Public Relations Assistant

The Aquarium at Fort Fisher has new residents in its Cape Fear Conservatory. Wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*) and bobwhites (*Colinus virginianus*) now meander through the half-acre of freshwater habitats. Ali and Mike Lubbock, directors of the Sylvan-Heights Waterfowl Center in Scotland Neck, donated the wood ducks, and Claude McAllister of the Seven Oaks Game Farm in Wilmington donated the bobwhites.



Wood ducks nest in tree cavities near water, but readily adapt to manmade nest boxes.



Photos by William Davis

Bobwhites are named for their call, a clearly whistled "bob-white."

Although the birds are officially assigned to the Roan Island exhibit, they have freedom to roam the entire conservatory. Wood ducks are one of the state's indigenous waterfowl species in coastal wetlands throughout the Eastern and Western United States and Mexico. Many wood ducks migrate to the Southern U.S. in winter. Others are year-round residents.

Bobwhites, also called quail or partridge, were in danger a quarter century ago due to development and over hunting. A group of conservationists – including Ducks Unlimited, hunters and farmers – began breeding the birds and reintroducing them into the wild. Today bobwhites are abundant throughout the state's fields and woodlands.

Turtle Symposium

Staff members from the Aquarium on Roanoke Island traveled to Loreto, Mexico, this winter to take part in the 28th annual International Sea Turtle Symposium. Aquarist Christian Guerreri, Educator David Sybert and Volunteer Diver Chris Guerreri attended the five-day event.

The symposium brought researchers, educators and enthusiasts from around the world to discuss the conservation and biology of sea turtles.

Sybert and Guerreri presented a poster on educational opportunities spawned by sea turtle necropsies, a collaborative effort involving the Aquarium, NC Wildlife Resources Commission and the Network for Endangered Sea Turtles. The collaboration has allowed agencies and nonprofit organizations to join forces and gain valuable information about endangered and threatened sea turtles. Guerreri and Sybert are primary researchers for the project, along with Karen Clark and Michelle Baker of the NC Wildlife Resources Commission.



Photo by C.P. "Buster" Nunemaker III

David Sybert (left) and Christian Guerreri (right) display the poster they presented at the International Sea Turtle Symposium. Volunteer diver Chris Guerreri (center) also made the trip.



Seahorses...A Special Breed!

By Heather Johnson, Aquarist

Within the coastal waters of North Carolina lives an amazing animal – the lined seahorse (*Hippocampus erectus*). Seahorses are named for their horse-like head, however, that's only the beginning of their interesting biology.

Seahorses don't have a stomach or teeth, making them a real challenge to feed at the Aquariums. The answer is a steady supply of tiny mysis shrimp. Seahorses graze on these small tidbits, using the mouth at the end of their long snout like a vacuum to "instantly" snatch a shrimp and swallow it whole.

Seahorses have independently moving eyes like a chameleon, skin that changes color like a squid, prehensile tails like a monkey, and a pouch like a kangaroo. Surprisingly, they mate for life, an unusual characteristic in the animal kingdom.

Their ability to change color is most noticeable during courtship, when a mating pair dances gracefully through the water, alternating from brown to yellow to white to red to orange or to silver.

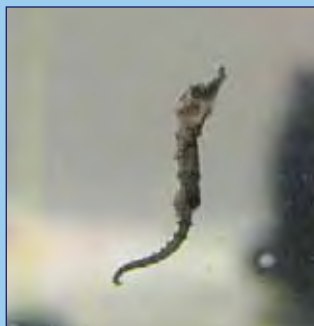
But the reproductive method of these small marine animals is their most amazing trait. Male seahorses are known for the swollen pouch when they become pregnant. That's right! Male seahorses carry the eggs and give birth to the young, called fry. After three weeks, some 250 fry emerge head-first from a small opening at the top of the pouch. Newborn lined seahorses are about the size of a grain of rice and are exact replicas of their parents. As adults, they can measure up to 7 inches in length.

Seahorse populations have declined dramatically. Major causes are habitat degradation by pollution and overfishing to supply hobbyists and Chinese medicine trades.

Today, seahorses are protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Like many aquariums, the NC Aquariums are working to breed and raise seahorses to conserve populations in the wild.



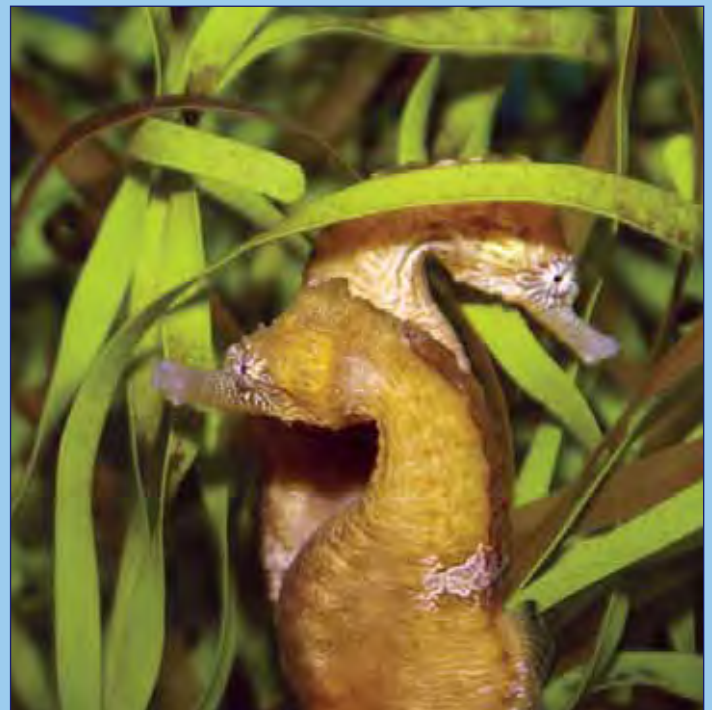
A male's protruding pouch indicates young fry on the way.



Newborns are on their own.



Mating seahorses often demonstrate unity by linking tails.



Mating begins with an elaborate courtship.

Photos by Emmett Westbrook, Foto FX



Photo Winners Announced!

Sea stars, cuttlefish, barracudas – these and more amazing aquatic animals were captured digitally and on film for the NC Aquariums' 2007 Amateur Underwater Photo Contest. The contest is sponsored by East Carolina Bank.

Eighty-three contestants submitted 221 photos in this year's contest. The competition offers three categories for entries, and participants can enter up to three photo-

graphs per category. Photos must be taken in waters off North Carolina; within the state's freshwater systems; or in one of the state's three public Aquariums. Deadline for entries is Dec. 31. Winners are announced in March.

Winners are chosen for creativity, proficiency in underwater photography, representation of North Carolina's marine organisms and habitats, and depiction of the beauty

and diversity of North Carolina's aquatic life. First place winners are awarded \$500; second place \$200; and third place \$100. Honorable Mentions receive \$50.

In this edition of *Aquarium News*, look for Honorable Mention winners on the cover inset, feature photo on page one, and on the back cover. To view winning entries, or for additional contest information, visit ncaquariums.com.



Underwater Close-ups

1st Place: Scallop

Lee Moore

Atlantic Beach, NC

Shot on Papoose wreck, 100 ft.

2nd Place: Basket star

Lee Moore

Atlantic Beach, NC

Shot on U-352 wreck, 105 ft.

3rd Place: Sea stars

Sandy Smith

Duncansville, PA

Shot on U-352, 95 ft.





Underwater Open

1st Place: Blackbar soldierfish
Chris Smith
Baltimore, Md
Shot on Naeco wreck, 120 ft.



2nd Place: Barracuda
Mark Hooper
Smyrna, NC
Safety stop, Hutton wreck, 20 ft.

3rd Place: Loggerhead sea turtle
Chris Walker
New Bern, NC
Shot on U-352 wreck, 50 ft.



At the Aquariums

1st Place: Wood duck
Carmen Johnson
Lexington, NC
Aquarium at Fort Fisher



2nd Place: Cuttlefish
Kimberly Sams
Charlotte, NC
Aquarium at Fort Fisher



3rd Place: Alligator
Konstantin Lobastov
Raleigh, NC
Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores

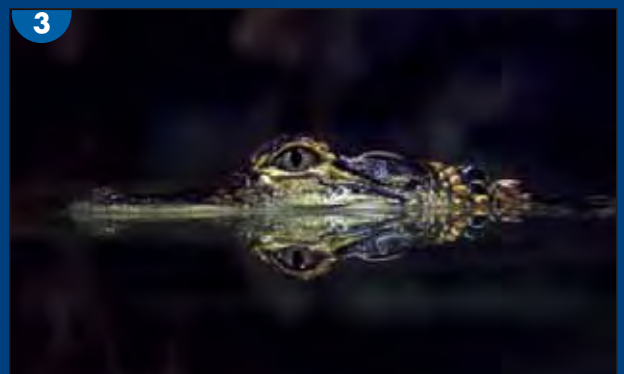




Photo by Bob Roush



Horticulturist Melanie Doyle has helped eradicate beach vitex, a highly invasive plant that can harm coastal dune ecosystems.

Seemed Like a Good Idea

By William Davis, Public Relations Assistant

In the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo in 1989, homeowners and government agencies began planting beach vitex (*Vitex rotundifolia*), an attractive plant with pretty purple flowers. The intent was to use the fast-spreading shrub to stabilize dunes and fight erosion. But what seemed like a good idea has turned into a problem. An invasive species, beach vitex has choked out native plants and is preventing birds and sea turtles from nesting.

Horticulturist Melanie Doyle at the Aquarium at Fort Fisher has worked as the state coordinator of the Beach Vitex Task Force since August 2007. Recently, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) awarded her its Sustainability Award in recognition of her efforts to eliminate this interloping shrub.

Along with her organizational duties, Doyle has personally led the effort to eradicate beach vitex in the Fort Fisher area. She also works to educate homeowners and government officials about the problems caused by this pretty but insidious plant. For information, or to report sightings, visit beachvitex.org.

Aquariums Tighten Belts

By Joanne Harcke and Pat McNeese
Conservation & Research Coordinators

Since last spring, North Carolina has experienced the worst drought in recorded history. Record heat and lack of rainfall have put serious pressure on water supplies. While the drought is most severe in the western mountain counties, the effects are being felt across the entire state.

The Aquariums are doing their part to reduce water consumption by upgrading cooling towers to use less water, installing cisterns to capture rainwater for plant irrigation, and modifying holding and display tank maintenance schedules.

In your own home, you can help by detecting and repairing plumbing leaks, taking short "navy" showers, planting drought-tolerant plants, and installing ultra-low flow toilets and other water-saving appliances. With no end to drought conditions in sight, we all need to do our part. Learn more about ways to conserve by checking the "Additional Information" section at ncaquariums.com/ff/savewater.



Photo by Kathy Mitchell

Cisterns at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island are one of the ways the Aquarium conserves water.



Spring Comes to the Coast

By Wendy Womble, Horticulturist



Photo by Sherry White

Butterfly Pea



Photo by Sherry White

Carolina Jessamine



Photo by Emmett Westbrook, Foto FX

Firewheel

Say "beach" and people think of sun, sand and surf. But the beach is much more. It has definite seasons, which are reflected in backwater marshes, forest woodlands and on sandy dunes.

By late March, the bronze winter foliage of the Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) in the woodlands is becoming green, highlighted by fragrant yellow flowers. It's also impossible to miss the blankets of Saltmarsh Morning Glory (*Ipomea saggitata*) that pop up around the edges of brackish marshes. Bees and butterflies migrate to the soft purple blooms of this perennial climbing vine, with its lush foliage that resembles Indian arrowheads.

Another woodland vine that makes a strong show is the lovely Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*), with its shocking orange blooms. Be careful, however. This beauty is also called Devil's Shoe String. It can take over large areas and has mildly toxic leaves and flowers. The delicate Butterfly Pea (*Clitoria mariana*), a non-climbing vine with pastel lavender blooms, delights as it unfurls in sandy, open areas across the coastal plain.

Keep an eye out for the showy Firewheel, also called Indian Blanket (*Gallardia pulchella*), that may be lurking close by on dunes or near beach accesses. This perennial puts on a bold display. Its orange and yellow blooms are vibrant from April until November, even in the most severe drought!

If too much water is an issue be on the lookout for the majestic Saltmarsh Mallow (*Kosteletzkya virginica*) along wetland perimeters. Its large bubblegum-pink blossoms can reach heights of 5 feet on thin, wispy stems. The occasional hummingbird may even come to visit this perennial subshrub.

And don't forget the Saltmarsh Mallow's tropical-looking cousin, Marsh Hibiscus, sometimes referred to as Crimsoneyed Rose Mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*). It's named for the striking red band in its center. This late season bloomer may be one of the last to emerge but it never disappoints.

All the NC Aquariums have trails or outdoor areas where you can observe native plants. Get off the beach, head into the hinterlands and enjoy all the colors and scents of our native coastal wildflowers. Spring at the coast really is a feast for the senses!



Photo by Sherry White

Marsh Hibiscus



Photo by Sherry White

Saltmarsh Mallow

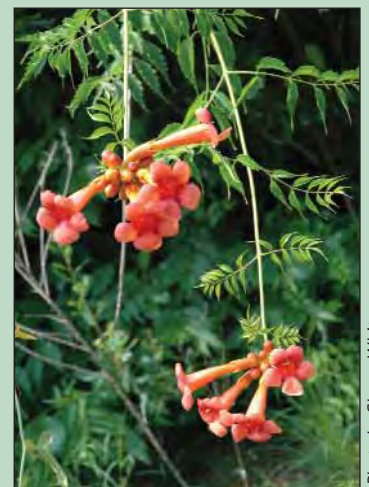


Photo by Sherry White

Trumpet Creeper



Photo by Sherry White

Saltmarsh Morning Glory



Going Green

By Amy Kilgore, Public Relations Coordinator

Leading by example can be a powerful tool. That's one of the reasons the Aquarium at Fort Fisher is asking special event rental patrons to make responsible choices in support of the Aquariums' mission of environmental conservation.

Special event patrons are being asked to consider "green" alternatives when hosting activities. Some suggestions include:

- Use recycled or recyclable beverage cups, plates and utensils. Better yet, use washable china, flatware and glassware.
- Provide condiments in bowls or bottles instead of in disposable packets.
- Serve shade-grown coffee and compost the grounds.
- Serve meals on platters rather than pre-wrapped foods.

The Aquarium also provides event patrons with a gift pack, encouraging further conservation efforts, such as recycling, composting, and purchasing seafood from "sustainable seafood" sources. Sustainable seafood is that which is fished or farmed to maintain or increase production without jeopardizing the ecosystem.

All three NC Aquariums offer special event options. For information, contact the Aquarium of your choice, or visit ncaquariums.com and review your selected Aquarium's options.



Using washable dinnerware and cloth linens helps the environment.

A Foto Moment

Buster Nunemaker, Public Relations Coordinator



Professional photography team Foto FX set up shop at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island in March. Kathy West, former Foto FX manager at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, is the site manager.

"The staff, managers and curators made the transition to our new location very easy," said West. "They've welcomed and helped us in so many ways. We've got lots of new and unique backgrounds for visitor photographs, and when we take their souvenir photo, they can even see it online on our website, fotofx.photogra.com."

Award Winners

Buster Nunemaker, Public Relations Coordinator

The Aquarium on Roanoke Island recently honored two of its own – Aquarist Connie Dobbs, and Head of Security and Safety Officer Paul Corsino.

Dobbs was presented the Starfish Award for her tireless contributions and team-player approach. Corsino received the Award of Excellence for his dedication and concern for the well-being and safety of staff and visitors.





Acacia thorn

West Indies

Lightweight, corky; rare,
highly-prized by collectors

Sea hearts

West Indies

From high-climbing woody vines;
favorite of collectors

Hamburger beans

South America

Considered "true" sea-beans; various
but similar shapes, colors

Coralbeans

North Carolina to Texas

Color, shape common to many plants in
Old and New Worlds

Nickernuts

Central Florida to Caribbean

Seeds of sprawling, vine-like
nickernut plant

Blister pod or Hand grenade

Amazon

"Fruit" from trees; bubble-like
air pockets allow pods to float

Bean Counters

By Julie Powers, Public Relations Coordinator

Some beachcombers take pride in knowing beans about the sea.

Those who have learned to look for more than shells delight in "sea beans" – seeds carried up from the tropics. Though wrack lines often keep the prizes a sandy secret, 22 varieties have been counted on Carolina shores.

Whimsical names match intriguing shapes – sea hearts, sea purses and hamburger beans. At the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, the Beach Finds discovery cart displays sea beans to help visitors identify the sometimes mysterious objects.

In North Carolina, currents bring the most sea beans to the Cape Lookout region, thanks to the Gulf Stream. Only nature knows why the seeds wander so far to inhospitable climates.

Capable of trans-Atlantic travel, sea beans are awash in lore. Some say a sea heart compelled Columbus to search for its source. Early Europeans thought the beans curative, magical and, for mariners, a good luck charm, having survived a long sea journey.

Unlike shells, sea beans don't come in with every tide. A sharp-eyed collector might pocket only a few per year, making them finds to treasure.

"Always then, in this flotsam and jetsam of the tide lines, we are reminded that a strange and different world lies offshore." – The Edge of the Sea, Rachel Carson

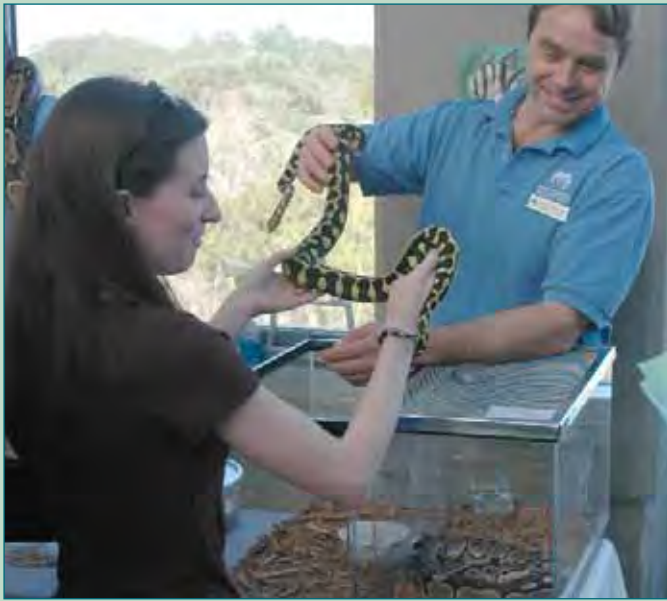
Royal Poinciana

Florida to Madagascar

Native to Madagascar;
introduced worldwide



Photo by Amy Kilgore



Husbandry Curator Hap Fatzinger introduces a visitor to one of the Aquarium's reptiles.

Scales and Tails

Amy Kilgore, Public Relations Coordinator

Visitors to the Aquarium at Fort Fisher got a close look at slithery, slimy and squirmy creatures during the inaugural "Scales and Tails" event in March. The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) has designated 2008 as "Year of the Frog." "Scales and Tails" was designed to highlight the worldwide plight facing amphibians.

More than 3,200 people became better acquainted with snakes, turtles, frogs, lizards and other animals during the event. Special guest speakers and hands-on presentations allowed visitors to learn more about these often overlooked species.

"We hope by allowing visitors to interact with live animals in a safe, fun environment – in the company of experts – we generate an interest in the fate of amphibians, reptiles and the environment we share," said Peggy Sloan, education curator.

Staff Hits the Streets

By Buster Nunemaker, Public Relations Coordinator

Two staff members at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island hit the streets running for the second annual Outer Banks Marathon (OBX Marathon). Proceeds from the event went to support the Dare County Education Foundation.

Sara Hallas, special activities instructor, and Katie Dicioccio, assistant aquarist, joined nearly 5,000 runners to cross the finish line. Hallas and Dicioccio trained

extensively over many months in preparation for the event. On many mornings, fellow staff members spied Dicioccio running across the Manteo/Nags Head Causeway.

Both runners crossed the finish line with more than respectable times. Hallas, running the half-marathon, finished in 2:34:08.75. Dicioccio, running the full marathon, clocked in at 3:36:17.



Sara Hallas



Katie Dicioccio

Photos by C.P. "Buster" Nunemaker III

Awards Honor 'Special Staff'

By Buster Nunemaker, Public Relations Coordinator

The Aquarium on Roanoke Island recently honored two of its priceless partners.

Chris Guerrieri received the 2007 Volunteer Diver of the Year award, presented by Patrick Murphy, Aquarium dive safety officer. As Guerrieri's dive instructor at the YMCA two years ago, Murphy took special pride in presenting the award. Guerrieri has accumulated more than 280 combined dives in the Aquarium's *Graveyard of the Atlantic* exhibit. He also dives in smaller exhibits as a scientific diver, and is a member of the Aquarium's Dive Control Board.

Fran Campbell was the recipient of the Aquarium's 2007 Volunteer of the Year award. Campbell contributes countless hours to the Aquarium, and is known as one of its most enthusiastic and knowledgeable touch tank interpreters. She continually increases her knowledge of local marine life and aquarium exhibits by taking part in training sessions and Aquarium-sponsored field trips.

Photos by C.P. "Buster" Nunemaker III



Chris Guerrieri



Fran Campbell



Top Honors

The Aquarium at Fort Fisher announced winners of two annual awards recognizing exemplary employee service. Winners were nominated and selected by their colleagues.

Receptionist Kathy Pinnick won the 2007 Outstanding Customer Service Award for work habits that contribute to greater customer satisfaction and high workplace morale. Education Curator Peggy Sloan won the 2007 Sea Star Award for outstanding job performance and community service. Sloan was cited for excellence in attitude, initiative, dependability and creativity.



Peggy Sloan



Kathy Pinnick

Photos by William Davis

Hats Off

The Aquarium Society recently honored two employees at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores for outstanding performance and commitment. Office Assistant Karen Parker was chosen for the 2007 Customer Service Award. Becky K. Davis, special events coordinator, was recognized with the 2007 Award of Excellence.

The membership-based Aquarium Society supports programs and activities at all three of the state's public Aquariums.



Karen Parker



Becky Davis

Photos by Julie Powers



Photo by Sathya Chinnadurai

A tube inserted into the brook trout's mouth delivers anesthesia water directly to the gills.

Surgery on a Different Scale

By Claire Aubel, Public Relations Assistant

It's an operation you won't see on *ER* or *House* – out-of-water fish surgery.

But the unusual procedure is nothing new for the N.C. State University College of Veterinary Medicine team that provides care for the Aquariums' animals.

Typically, fish surgery is performed on site and the "patient" is placed on a water-doused foam pad. A specially-designed

device then pumps anesthetic-treated water through the mouth and over the gills.

At the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, Dr. Craig Harms recently performed two surgeries: one on a brook trout that had a suspicious mass on its face, and another on a black sea bass that had an infected eye.

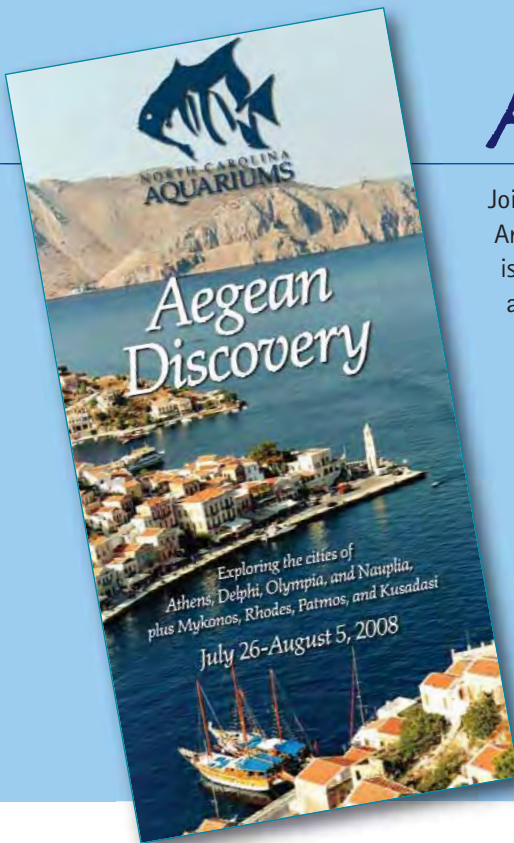
According to Harms, 20 years ago such problems would have likely doomed the fish; however, advances in aquatic medicine have made surgical solutions more available. The Aquariums have chosen to take advantage of such new and emerging options. "A strong conservation ethic at the Aquariums, combined in some cases with the growing difficulty and cost of replacing animals, has increased the use of surgery," said Harms.

The veterinary team has operated on more than two dozen ailing fish in the past two years, and closely monitors patients during recovery.



Photo by Greg Lewbart

Surgeon Hope Valentine prepares for eye surgery on an anesthetized black sea bass.



AEGEAN ADVENTURE

Join the Aquariums for a once-in-a-lifetime adventure to discover the secrets of the Aegean Sea! Ancient stone temples, mountain tops once home to gods and oracles, gleaming white-washed island towns with narrow, winding streets – this is Greece. Many of the world's most fascinating archaeological sites lie scattered among these sun-drenched islands, and we've put together an 11-day cruise to sample the best.

From Athens and the temples of the Acropolis to the Oracle of Delphi and Olympia, where the original Olympic Games were held, we'll explore the fabled sites of Greek mythology. We'll take in the spectacular mountain scenery of this historic region, and visit picturesque fishing villages along the way in the company of expert local guides. We've also allowed plenty of leisure time to enjoy our comfortable cruise ship, as well as four nights ashore at outstanding hotels. Best of all, our group rate represents a tremendous value, starting as low as \$1,609 per person for inside cabins!

For more information and to receive our colorful brochure with full itinerary and map, please give me a call at 919.877.5500 extension 226. I look forward to being with you on this exciting adventure!

Mark Joyner

Executive Vice President
NC Aquarium Society

ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

Day 1– Sat.: Board your overnight transatlantic flight.

Day 2– Sun.: Arrive in Athens, Greece; meet your tour director and Aquarium Society traveling companions.

Day 3– Mon.: Explore Athens; sites include the Acropolis, the Parthenon, the Roman temple of Zeus, and the Agora where Socrates taught.

Day 4– Tues.: Athens to Delphi; travel overland to this ancient city and explore Mount Parnassus and the excavations associated with the famed Archaeological Museum.

Day 5– Wed.: Delphi to Olympia; visit captivating fishing villages on the Peloponnese and the legendary city of Olympia.

Day 6– Thur.: Mycenae to Epidaurus; enjoy the breathtaking scenery of the Arkadian mountains en route to the Beehive Tombs, the Treasury of Atreus, and the remains of Agamemnon's Royal Palace.

Day 7– Fri.: Nauplia to Mykonos; embark our ship, the *Aquamarine*, and sail the Aegean to the mountainous island of Mykonos, famous for its unique windmills and dazzling white houses.

Day 8– Sat.: Rhodes; explore the exotic sights of this historic city with its ramparts and palaces built during the Crusades.

Day 9– Sun.: Patmos to Kusadasi, Turkey; enjoy the tiny island where St. John the Divine wrote the book of Revelations. An optional side trip to the excavations of Ephesus is available.

Day 10– Mon.: Piraeus to Athens; after breakfast onboard, disembark and return to Athens to catch-up on last-minute shopping or sightseeing.

Day 11– Tues.: Flight home.

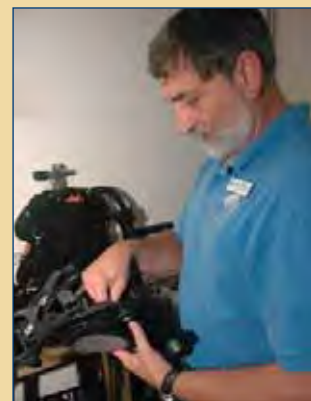


Amy Kilgore

Changing of the Guard

Amy Kilgore is the new public relations coordinator at the Aquarium at Fort Fisher. Kilgore also serves as editor for the Aquarium's educational and promotional publications and, most recently, was public relations and events coordinator at the Cameron Art Museum in Wilmington.

Brian Germick has been named the Aquarium's new dive safety officer. Germick, a five-year Aquarium veteran, is responsible for maintenance of life support equipment and diver safety for the staff and the Aquarium's volunteer dive team.



Brian Germick

Photos by Williams Davis



Join the NORTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM Family!



Photo by Sandy Smith

Membership Application

Your membership provides crucial operational support to the North Carolina Aquariums. All three Aquariums have now completed exciting expansions with the additions of new exhibits, huge ocean tanks, and indoor habitats for aquatic wildlife ranging from otters to alligators. More than **ONE MILLION VISITORS** will enjoy the unique educational experiences offered by the Aquariums this year.

It doesn't hurt that Aquarium membership is also the best deal around. Families can enjoy **UNLIMITED FREE ADMISSION** at the Aquariums, as well as at the NC Zoo for just \$50 a year! What's more, our Aquarium members receive free admission at more than one hundred other zoos and aquariums all around the country.

Members also receive a free subscription to the award-winning *Aquarium News* magazine, as well as 10% discounts on Aquarium gift shop purchases and educational programs. Add in complimentary guest passes to share with friends, and an exclusive MEMBER tote bag for Donor level and above, and it's clear that membership definitely has its advantages.

I. Choose a Member Category

- ☐ **Individual** (Benefits for one person) _____ \$30
- ☐ **Family** (Benefits for two adults and their children or grandchildren under age 18) _____ \$50
- ☐ **Donor** (Benefits with 4 guest passes and **exclusive MEMBER tote bag**) _____ \$100
- ☐ **Patron** (Donor benefits with 6 guest passes and 10% discount on Aquarium rentals) _____ \$300
- ☐ **Director** (Donor benefits with 8 guest passes and 10% discount on Aquarium rentals) _____ \$500
- ☐ **Benefactor** (Donor benefits with 10 guest passes and 10% discount on Aquarium rentals) _____ \$1,000

II. Member Information

Name of 1st Adult

Name of 2nd Adult

Address:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Email Address: _____

☐ Please check here if you wish to receive Aquarium updates by Email

Number of children or grandchildren under age 18: _____

I / We primarily visit the Aquarium at:

☐ Roanoke Island ☐ Pine Knoll Shores ☐ Fort Fisher

III. Payment Information

Total Payment: \$ _____

Method: ☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

(Please make checks payable to NC Aquarium Society)

Card Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Thank you for your support of the North Carolina Aquariums!

This application can be turned in at the Aquariums when you visit or mailed to the NC Aquarium Society, 3125 Poplarwood Ct., Suite 160, Raleigh, NC 27604.





This brown water snake struck a pose for Douglas Hayes in the *Roadside Wonders* exhibit at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores. Hayes' photo received Honorable Mention in the 2007 At the Aquariums category.



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